



Anne of Green Gables

L. M. Montgomery



Summary

Anne Shirley arrives by chance in Avonlea, a small rural village in Canada on Prince Edward Island and slowly wins over the hearts of her adoptive parents and neighbors.

Chapter 1: Green Gables, a farm in Avonlea, is the home of Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert, a middle-aged single brother and sister who want to adopt a boy to help them on the farm. However, Anne, an orphan girl, is sent by mistake and on her first night she cries herself to sleep when she learns that they were looking for a boy. That night Matthew tells Marilla that he wants to keep Anne.

Chapter 2: As Marilla takes Anne to Mrs. Spencer, an orphanage worker, and Anne tells her the sad story of her life, Marilla hesitates. She then refuses to leave Anne when she is told that she is going to be in the care of such an unkind woman as Mrs. Blewett.

Chapter 3: Mrs. Lynde meets Anne for the first time and makes fun of her red hair. Anne reacts angrily and, after refusing to apologize for a day, she finally tells Mrs. Lynde she is sorry just to make Matthew happy.

Chapter 4: Anne puts some wild flowers on her hat to go to church and is invited to go to a party. But then Marilla loses a brooch and blames Anne for it. Anne makes a false confession so that she can go to the party, but Marilla does not let her go. Fortunately, Marilla finds the brooch, she apologizes to Anne and lets her go to the party.

Chapter 5: Diana Barry, a neighbor, becomes Anne's best friend. Anne's first day at school turns out to be a nightmare since she breaks her slate on Gilbert Blythe's head because he makes fun of her red hair. Anne is punished and has to sit next to him the whole day. Anne refuses to talk to Gilbert despite his attempts. She drops out of school and studies at home.

Chapter 6: Anne's ways often get her into trouble as a young girl, but after each incident, there is a happy ending. Anne invites Diana for tea but instead of giving her cordial, she gives her wine. Mrs. Barry says she doesn't want her to spend time with Diana. But one day, Minnie May, Diana's sister, has croup and Anne saves her life. Mrs. Barry apologizes to Anne, and Anne and Diana can be friends once again.

Chapter 7: Anne bakes a cake for Mrs. Allan, the reverend's wife, but she put medicine into it instead of vanilla. Mrs. Allan finds it funny, consoles Anne and invites her to tea with her.

Chapter 8: At Diana's party, Anne tries to climb up Diana's house and falls. She has to stay in bed for a long time. When Anne gets better, she recites two poems in a concert wearing the new dress that Matthew gives her for Christmas.

Chapter 9: As Anne hates her red hair, she dyes it and it turns green. Although she washes it every day, the color stays. Marilla then decides to cut it short. Another day Anne gets into trouble on an old boat when she lets the river carry her away. Fortunately, Gilbert Blythe saves her, but she still refuses to be his friend.

Chapter 10: Anne sits for the Queen's College examinations to become a teacher. Anne and Gilbert Blythe's names come first.

Chapter 11: Matthew dies and Marilla is afraid she will have to sell Green Gables. Anne is able to return to the village to teach at her old school and take care of Marilla. When she finds out that she got the teaching job thanks to Gilbert, she no longer hates him and they finally become friends.

About the author

Lucy Maud Montgomery was born on November 30, 1874, on Prince Edward Island, eastern Canada. Her mother died when she was 21 months old, and she was raised by her grandparents. Montgomery lived on Prince Edward Island until she married the Reverend Ewen Macdonald, then moved to north Ontario and had three children. She wrote a dozen novels there, many of them about Prince Edward Island, including *Anne of Green Gables*. It was an immediate success and has been translated into fifteen languages. Even Prince Edward Island has become famous because of the book. Other books that followed are *Anne of Avonlea*, *Anne of the Island*,



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and *Anne's House of Dreams* in which Anne finally marries Gilbert Blythe. Montgomery also wrote poems.

The original text

Anne of Green Gables, written in 1908, gives a good picture of rural society in Canada in the late 1800s.

Anne of Green Gables is partly autobiographical. Like Lucy Montgomery, Anne enjoys reading and becomes a teacher, and most of the stories about her take place on Prince Edward Island. Both Anne and Montgomery lost their mothers.

Background and themes

Anne of Green Gables is a "Bildungsroman": a novel of personal development. That is why its themes are as relevant now as they were in 1908, when the book was written:

Social expectations: What are people in Avonlea like at the beginning of the story? How do people new to Avonlea feel?

Imagination: What kind of things does Anne imagine?

Adjustment: How do people change after Anne arrives at Green Gables? What things does Anne learn about herself?

Friendship: How important are friends in life?

Loss: Who does Anne lose in her life? How does she feel each time?

Growth: How does Anne change from the beginning of the story to the end?

Discussion activities

Chapter 1

Before reading

- 1 **Guess:** In pairs, have students look at the cover. Have them do the following.
 - a Describe the picture.
What is the girl doing?
How old is she?
What color is her hair?
 - b Look at the map on page 1.
Where is Prince Edward Island?
What sea is that?
What do you think people on Prince Edward Island do?

While reading

- 2 **Discuss:** Have students talk about gossip.
Why does Mrs. Lynde want to know about other people's lives? Do you know anyone like her?

- 3 **Discuss:** Have students talk about orphans.
Why do Matthew and Marilla want a child?
What does Mrs. Lynde think about orphans?
Do people think differently nowadays?
- 4 **Discuss:** Have students talk about homelessness.
How does Anne feel when she learns that she is not wanted? Is it the first time that Anne feels like this?

After reading

- 5 **Write:** Have students write about Anne's thoughts. Have them suppose they are Anne and write down her thoughts after she is told they were expecting a boy.
- 6 **Artwork:** Get students to write Anne's classified ad asking for adoptive parents.

Chapters 2–3

While reading

- 7 **Discuss:** Have students discuss changing one's mind.
Why does Marilla agree to have Anne? Because Matthew asks her? Because Anne had a sad life? Because she fears that Blewett will not want Anne after a short time? Because Mrs. Blewett is an unkind woman?
- 8 **Discuss:** Have students talk about hair.
Anne hates her red hair. Do you like your hair? Why (not)? Do you dye it? Is it important that your hair looks good? Can women show their hair in your country?

After reading

- 9 **Write:** Have students think about feelings. Tell them to suppose they are Anne and write down her feelings after she is told that she can stay with Matthew and Marilla.
- 10 **Research:** Have students consider discipline. Have them ask their parents and grandparents questions about what they were allowed to do when they were children and compare it to what the students are expected to do today.

Chapters 4–5

Before reading

- 11 **Research:** Have students think about fashion. Have them look at the pictures in the book and use the Internet.
What did men and women wear in Anne's times? Do you like those clothes?

While reading

- 12 **Discuss:** Have students talk about clothes.
Do you remember any clothes that you hated when you were a child?
- 13 **Read carefully:** In Chapter 4, we see that Marilla starts to like Anne. Have students underline the parts of the text where this can be seen.
- 14 **Write:** Have students write Anne's prayers. The day the brooch gets lost is the day before the party. Have students write what Anne asks God that night.



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After reading

- 15 **Write:** Have students write a short letter from Marilla to Anne saying how sorry she feels.
- 16 **Write:** Tell students to suppose they are Anne and write two lists: "The Five Things I Love about Diana Barry" and "The Five Things I Hate about Gilbert Blythe."

Chapters 6–7

Before reading

- 17 **Guess:** Have students imagine what things can go wrong if they invite somebody to tea.

While reading

- 18 **Role play:** In pairs, ask students to imagine the following situation and act it out.
You are Mrs. Barry and your daughter is back home drunk from Anne's house. What do you say to Marilla?
- 19 **Discuss:** Have students talk about making mistakes.
Anne makes lots of mistakes in these chapters. Do you remember making the same mistakes?

After reading

- 20 **Write:** Have students write Mrs. Barry's letter of apology to Anne after Anne saved Minnie May's life.
- 21 **Write:** Have students write Mrs. Allan's invitation to tea with Anne.

Chapters 8–9

Before reading

- 22 **Read carefully and guess:** Write cards with the following phrases: "top of Diana's house," "green hair" and "boat in the river." Have students guess what happens to Anne.

While reading

- 23 **Discuss:** Have students talk about their hair.
Do you remember doing something wrong to your hair?
- 24 **Discuss:** Have students talk about pride.
Why is Anne still angry with Gilbert? Is she right?

After reading

- 25 **Role play:** Have students act out Anne and Gilbert's parts when Anne is in the river.

Chapters 10–11

While reading

- 26 **Discuss:** Have students talk about studying.
Are/Were you a good student at school? Is it important to be a good student? Why (not)?
- 27 **Discuss:** Have students talk about becoming friends.
Are you friends with somebody who was your enemy first?

After reading

- 28 **Write:** Have students write newspaper headlines.
On page 52, Diana arrives with a newspaper in her hand. Have students write 3 headlines.
- 29 **Discuss:** Have students think about what might happen after the story ends. Anne thinks at the end, "I know I'm going to be happy ... Everything is going to be all right."
Get students to discuss what will happen after this and write some ideas for the next book about Anne.

Vocabulary activities

For the Word list and vocabulary activities, go to www.penguinreaders.com.